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MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

RESOLUTION

*New Delhi, the 16th December 1950*

**No. 13/2/50-Public.**—At nine thirty-seven on the morning of Friday, December 15, 1950, the hand of death fell on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and put an end to the life of a great Indian, an unmatched warrior in the cause of freedom, a great servant of the people, and a statesman of mighty achievement. The same evening, in the City of Bombay, where he had laboured for a great part of his life in the cause of India's freedom, his mortal remains were reduced to ashes.

More than thirty-four years ago, he came under the influence of and joined Mahatma Gandhi, and from that day onwards his abounding energy was devoted to the struggle for freedom. By his courage, discipline, and genius for organisation, he became one of the principal lieutenants of the Father of the Nation and a great leader in India's struggle. His championship of the poor and underprivileged made him the leader of the peasant campaign at Bardoli. Under his leadership the peasants of Bardoli maintained the strictest discipline in the face often of grave provocation. Bardoli became a symbol and an inspiration to the rest of India.

In failing health he continued, without rest or respite, his service of India. When independence was, at last, achieved, it

was inevitable that he should take an outstanding part in the service of free India. It was fortunate for India that Sardar Patel had this opportunity to put the coping stone to his life's labour. He had only a little more than three years to give in that service, and these years were a period of great turmoil and conflict in India and the world and, for him personally of increasing ill-health and physical weakness. His achievements during this short period will be recorded in India's history with pride and admiration. He devoted himself to the great task unifying the country and maintaining its stability against all disruptive forces. In particular, his genius was demonstrated in the way he handled the difficult and complicated problem of the old Indian States. He fixed his goal, a united and strong India, and set about to achieve it with determination. He advanced step by step towards this goal, ever keeping the final objective before himself and others and, at the same time, by negotiation and friendly compromise winning the willing consent of the rulers and people of those States. Thus he made a united India out of hundreds of heterogeneous States, whose separate existence would have been a powerful force for disintegration in these troublous times.

As Deputy Prime Minister and in charge of two of the most important portfolios of Home and States, a heavy responsibility was cast upon him. That burden and responsibility he bore with patience, courage and wisdom. To the people of India and to the Governments at the Centre and in the States, the loss is grievous and irreparable. It is for the people of this country to follow the shining example of his devotion to duty, his steadfastness, and discipline, and thus to achieve in an ever-growing degree that free and strong and prosperous India for which he laboured.

H. V. R. IENGAR, Secy.